

CLAIMS

1. A method of providing a surface of a material with an image, the method comprising applying to the surface an image sheet comprised of
 - (i) a flexible layer of a Shape Memory Polymer (or like material), and
 - (ii) an image bonded to said layer by means of an image key coat,and bonding said image sheet to the surface by means of an adhesive and a process which involves heating of the Shape Memory Polymer (or like material) to a temperature above its Glass Transition Temperature.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the material is flexible.
3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the material is leather, a textile material or a synthetic plastics material.
4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein the material is leather.
5. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the SMP has a T_g value of 25-45°C.
6. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the SMP layer has a thickness of 20 to 60 microns.
7. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the image key coat comprises an adhesive or an adhesion promoter.
8. A method as claimed in claim 7 wherein an ink receptive layer is provided between the image and the layer of the adhesive or adhesion promoter providing the image key coat.

9. A method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 8 wherein the adhesive for bonding the image sheet to the material is a heat activated adhesive which is activated at a temperature 2-3° lower than the Glass Transition Temperature of the SMP layer.
10. An image sheet comprised of
 - (i) a flexible layer of a shape memory polymer (or like material), and
 - (ii) an image bonded to said layer by means of an image key coat.
11. An image sheet as claimed in claim 10 wherein the SMP has a T_g value of 25-45°C.
12. An image sheet as claimed in claim 10 or 11 wherein the SMP layer has a thickness of 20 to 60 microns.
13. An image sheet as claimed in any one of claims 10 to 12 wherein the image key coat comprises an adhesive or an adhesion promoter.
14. An image sheet as claimed in claim 13 wherein an ink receptive layer is provided between the image and the layer of the adhesive or adhesion promoter providing the image key coat.
15. An image sheet as claimed in any of claims 10 to 14 provided with an adhesive for bonding the SMP layer and image to the surface of a material.
16. An image sheet as claimed in claim 15 wherein said adhesive is a heat activated adhesive which is activated at a temperature 2-3° lower than the Glass Transition Temperature of the SMP layer.
17. An image transfer assembly comprising an image sheet as claimed in any one of claims 10 to 16 on a releasable carrier.
18. A kit comprising:

(i) a 'pre-image' assembly comprised of a releasable carrier on which is provided an SMP layer with an image key coat layer associated with an ink receptive surface,

(ii) an adhesive, and

(iii) a material for application of an image thereto.

19. A kit as claimed in claim 18 which is an "art kit".

20. An art kit as claimed in claim 19 which incorporates paint.

21. A kit as claimed in claim 19 or 20 which additionally incorporates a hardenable texturing material.

22. A kit as claimed in any one of claims 19 to 21 wherein the material for application of an image thereto is canvas.

23. A package comprising shoes and further comprising

(i) a 'pre-image' assembly comprised of a releasable carrier on which is provided an SMP layer with an image key coat layer associated with an ink receptive surface,

(ii) an adhesive, and

(iii) a material for application of an image thereto.

24. A package as claimed in claim 23 further comprising removable covers for the shoes.

25. A 'pre-image' assembly comprised of a releasable carrier on which is provided an SMP layer with an image key coat layer associated with an ink receptive surface.